

will control the next 30 minutes. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 3044, the Consumer First Energy Act.

Last night cloture was filed on the Boxer substitute amendment to the climate change legislation. Under rule XXII, there is a 1 p.m. filing deadline for first-degree amendments to the Boxer substitute No. 4825. The cloture vote is scheduled to occur tomorrow morning—Friday morning.

At 4 o'clock this afternoon, there will be up to 1 hour for debate on the farm bill, H.R. 6124, prior to a vote. Under an agreement reached last night, Senator DEMINT will control 30 minutes; Senator COBURN, 20 minutes; and Senators HARKIN and CHAMBLISS will control a total of 10 minutes. Therefore, the vote on passage of the farm bill will begin around 5 p.m. today.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 6049

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 6049 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6049) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for energy production and conservation, to extend certain expiring provisions, to provide individual income tax relief, and for other purposes.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I now object to any further proceedings at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

ELECTED TO LEAD

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me say that at this moment we are on Thursday of this workweek with the possibility and likelihood of a cloture vote tomorrow morning in the Senate. If one looks at the business of the Senate this week, it is a good thing we are not being paid for piecemeal because we have done so little.

We had an initial motion to go to this climate security bill, which is an important piece of legislation. That was considered early in the week, and then a second measure, which was very brief, on adopting a budget—an important document but one that had already been debated at length many times in this Chamber. We burned 30 hours off the clock in what was requested for a general debate. That, of course, took place, and it was a good debate: a bipartisan effort to explain an important bill involving global warming and carbon pollution which is changing the world we live in.

Then a request was made yesterday by the Republican leader that this bill, the Climate Security Act, be read in its entirety into the RECORD. So for 8

hours, our staff had to stand and read every word of this bill into the RECORD. This bill—the substitute—had been available for days and the concepts behind it for weeks. There was no element of surprise, no necessity for this reading, other than to burn off an entire day in the Senate where little or nothing was accomplished. Now we face virtually the same thing again.

Although 89 percent of the people in America say that global warming is an important issue that should be addressed by the Senate, this week there have been repeated efforts to make sure we never reach that point. Those who oppose this bill should stand and vote accordingly. Those who have amendments should bring them forward. We are still waiting for a list of amendments to the global warming bill from the Republican side. We have given them a list of our amendments, including a bipartisan amendment offered by Senator LUGAR, who just spoke on the floor, and Senator BIDEN. We have tried to engage the minority in a debate on this critically important bill, but instead, they have engaged in delay tactics, including 8 hours wasted in the Senate yesterday reading this bill in its entirety.

We finally adjourned at about 12:15 a.m. this morning to return today. I guess it is the intention of the Republicans to stop us from considering the global warming issue, but that will not stop the dangers being created by global warming in the United States and around the world. If we are truly elected to lead, I cannot understand why the Republican minority will not engage us in a meaningful and honest debate about this bill. That is why we are here. We should be voting on amendments, testing different theories and policies to see what the majority feels in the Senate, but instead, we are caught up in this exercise: 8 hours of reading this bill—a tremendous waste of time and energy that the Senate should have put to more productive purposes.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, since the substitute amendment by Senator BOXER was just given to us at 11 o'clock in the morning, you could argue—almost with a straight face—that reading the proposal was a good idea, but, of course, that was not what it was about. It was somewhat similar to when Senator REID, the now-majority leader, used 9 hours reading chapters from his book back in 2003. In a 9-hour filibuster over judicial nominations, on November 19, 2003, Democratic leader HARRY REID discoursed on

the virtues of wooden matches and read chapters from his book about his hometown: "Searchlight: The Camp That Didn't Fail." That was a 9-hour recitation from a book that our good friend the majority leader engaged in on the very subject of judicial confirmations.

Yesterday's tactic of slowing down the Senate obviously is not unique. It was not, however, about trying to confirm a few district court nominations which the majority begrudgingly agreed to last night around 12:00 or 12:30. Rather, it was about the importance of keeping one's word in this body, whether it be a commitment to meet the total number of circuit court confirmations that have occurred in prior Congresses—and we are familiar with what that commitment was; it was to do 17 during this Congress, which has been repeated time and time again; everybody knows what the commitment was—or a commitment to confirm a specific number of circuit court nominations by a specific time; and that was the commitment made back in May by my good friend the majority leader, that we would do three circuit court nominations before the Memorial Day recess. In fact, we did one. Keeping one's word in this body is important.

We are far behind the pace that is necessary for us to reach the goal the majority leader and I set for this Congress. If that weren't troubling enough, what we heard recently by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee are threats to shut down the confirmation process completely. Stop it already. Surely, that is not his plan. So be assured the Republican Conference will continue to make the point that judicial nominations need to be treated fairly and that commitments need to be kept, and we will use the tools available to the minority to do so until that proves to be the case. This is not over, I assure you.

CLIMATE SECURITY ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the majority leader said recently that global warming was "the most important issue facing the world today." Let me repeat that: the most important issue affecting the world today. And nearly three-fourths of the Senate thought it was important enough to have a debate on the Senate floor. Seventy-four Senators voted to bring this measure to the floor for debate because they recognized the significance of this issue. Yet the majority is blocking fair consideration.

Instead of allowing a full debate with an open amendment process designed to improve the bill, the majority last night filled the tree. What are they afraid of? Why don't they want to consider amendments to a bill addressing what they call "the most important issue facing the world today"? If it is the most important issue facing the world today, it certainly deserves a lot longer debate than a few days.

At \$6.7 trillion, the climate tax bill—which is what we have before us—the climate tax bill is the largest bill we will consider this Congress. As the Wall Street Journal noted, this legislation represents the most extensive—the most extensive—reorganization of the American economy since the 1930s, which is why, of course, I am mystified as to why the Democrats decided to block the consideration of any and all amendments designed to improve this bill: no consideration of gas prices, no consideration of clean energy technology. A bill with such widespread ramifications merits serious, thoughtful consideration and a thorough debate.

A good example of how to handle a bill like this properly, another time when our good friends on the other side were in the majority—and there was a Republican in the White House—when the Senate considered the Clean Air Act amendments in 1990, the process took 5 weeks on the floor. There were about 180 amendments offered. I was here then, and nobody was telling one side or the other what they had to offer. Nobody said you have to show me your amendment first or I will not let you offer it. And 131 of those amendments were ultimately acted upon by the full Senate.

As it currently stands, we would not even spend 5 days on this bill. But we would like to spend more time on the bill and would encourage the majority to open the process. I don't know what they are afraid of. Since when did we descend to the point in this body that we would not let somebody offer an amendment unless they get to read it first? That isn't the way the Senate used to operate. Yet the majority blocked us from offering even one amendment regarding this massive restructuring.

That makes me wonder, why doesn't the majority want a fair debate on this bill? What are we afraid of? If this bill alone will "save the planet," as has been suggested, why are they refusing to allow an open debate or more than 2 days on the bill?

Perhaps they don't want to expose this bill for what it really is: a climate tax. It is a climate tax. This legislation will raise gas prices, electricity prices, diesel prices, natural gas prices, and fertilizer prices. It will also put America at a significant economic disadvantage compared to the rest of the world.

Given that families are already struggling to pay record gas prices—it is nearly \$4 a gallon now—Congress should be working to lower gas prices, not increase them.

Republicans are eager to offer amendments to the Boxer climate tax bill to develop clean energy solutions and promote economic growth. In America, we tackle problems like this with technology, not by clamping down on our own economy. If this is a problem—and many of us believe it is—the way to get at it is with technology and then sell it to the Indians and Chinese,

who, I assure you, are not going to do this to their own economies. They are going to take advantage of our foolish decision to clamp down our own economy and have jobs exported to China and India.

If the majority is serious about debating this issue, then let's have a real debate, complete with an open amendment process. Don't shut it down after only 1 day.

This is entirely too important to consumers, to our economy, and to the climate to block a thorough consideration.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSING OF SENATOR CRAIG THOMAS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, a year ago yesterday marked the occasion of the loss of our good friend and colleague, Craig Thomas, who was the senior Senator from Wyoming at the time. He lost his battle with leukemia at the age of 74.

Born and raised in Cody, WY, a town named after Buffalo Bill, Craig was brought up on a ranch. He brought those values of America's western small towns to our Nation's Capital.

So the Senator from America's smallest State by population, home to a rugged and independent-minded people, was one of the Senate's leading advocates for a smaller, more efficient, and more responsive government.

Other Senators who got to know Craig found him to be always polite and courteous. Yet that did not make him a pushover. A Marine captain, who rose to that rank from the rank of private, Craig was a man of discipline and a man of principle. He was a perfect fit for the people and the values of his great State.

As accomplished as he was, Senator Thomas was also not afraid to poke a little fun at himself as well. I know he once displayed a series of pictures in his Senate office of himself trying his hand at roping a horse. The pictures depict, one by one, his less than successful attempts, and then his unceremonious fall off his steed and onto the dirt.

Many of my colleagues will remember his subtle sense of humor, his skill at working with others to advance legislation, and his passion for promoting the best interests of Wyoming.

I know my colleagues continue to hold his dear wife Susan, a great friend of all of us, and their four children, Peter, Patrick, Greg, and Lexie, in our thoughts. We still consider them members of our Senate family.

I also know how much Craig would be pleased that Senators MIKE ENZI and JOHN BARRASSO are holding to the high standards he set and making Wyoming proud.

A man of grit and courage, Craig never backed down from a challenge, not even his final struggle with leukemia. Through the end of his life, he represented Wyoming with honor and

dignity. Admired by all who knew him, he leaves behind a legacy of legislative accomplishment, as well as a Chamber full of very dear friends in the Senate. We still miss him a lot.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to say a word about the issue of global warming. I notice that my colleagues are waiting to speak in tribute to Craig Thomas, and I will also say a word about that.

I have to agree with Senator REID when he said that global warming is one of the most important issues of our age. I believe he said it was the most important global issue and, of course, we realize whatever our undertaking may be in life, it is of little value if we don't live on a planet that can sustain life. That is what we are worried about—that we have warming and carbon pollution that is changing the planet on which we live.

I cannot think of a more formidable challenge that we have ever faced. That is why we think it is important to move forward with this legislation. The notion that we have blocked all amendments is not true. We have said to the Republicans repeatedly: Provide us with the amendments. Show us what you are going to offer. Here is what we will offer. I think that is a good-faith effort—at least on our side—to try to start this important debate. Yet the Republican side has refused. They took 30 hours of general debate and didn't produce amendments. They asked that this bill be read for 8 hours, and they didn't produce any amendments.

Our fear, of course, is that when the time for actual debate begins, without any indication of what they might offer, we will face the same thing we did on the GI bill. If you recall that legislation, which was to help our returning veterans, it was stopped in its tracks by an amendment offered on the Republican side, with a cloture motion filed. That meant that 30 hours had to be burned off the clock while we waited for the cloture motion to ripen.

Now, that is use of a procedure here which doesn't advance the debate or deliberations. So we asked for assurances from the Republican side. We asked is this going to be a good-faith effort to debate and amend this bill? Will you produce the amendments? They would not. It is clear they don't want to. They are opposed to this bill. We have seen this before. We have had 72 filibusters during this session. We have broken all of the records of the Senate. The Republican minority has stopped us time and again when we have tried to bring up critically important issues for our Nation and the world.

President Bush and the Republicans have dismissed this issue of global